

Historical Facts of Cromwell Oil Pool—Wetumka, Okla.

Each year that passes sees some one man that stands out more than the rest and this is especially true of Joseph L. Cromwell of Muskogee, Okla., who is the discoverer of the famous Wetumpka pool in Hughes county, Oklahoma.

In the year 1873 or "grasshopper year" just 48 years ago in the little hamlet of Topeka, Kan., Joseph L. Cromack was born inheriting many of the characteristics of Englishmen. He grew up as a boy, fearless of undertaking, not at all fearful of being involved, a typical American pioneer and business man, a good scout and a true example of American individualism.

At the present time Mr. Cromwell is residing at Muskogee, Okla., where leisure moments are enjoyed among the Boy scouts. He is scoutmaster of Troop 3, Muskogee, consisting of 33 boys and five Eagle scouts. His son Joseph, Jr., is a member of this troop, and it is only natural that Mr. Cromwell should take more than ordinary interest in the sports and work of this splendid organization.

His most worthy efforts were his operations in the Crowsnest and Hughes country, which was an uncertain venture in a wildcat territory. Here for many months, regardless of all conditions, he was successful in finding oil. It may be said to be one of the largest structures in the Oklahoma area. Here a new and prolific stratum was discovered which up to the present time has been almost entirely unexplored, and is entirely due to the efforts of Mr. Cromwell, and it seems to the outsider, that due to the persistent efforts of the discoverer, that this new stratum is now termed the Cromwell pool and is designated the "Cromwell sand."

Unlike most discoveries of a new and prolific territory, Mr. Cromwell was not left with only a few scattered acres of land to repay him for his pioneering efforts, but retains large holdings. In addition, aside from his interest with Dr. J. C. Whitchoit and the Prairie Oil & Gas Co. throughout Hughes and Seminole counties, Oklahoma, and these will keep him busy developing and operating for years to come.

Mr. Cromwell has royalties on both of the 5-8-10, and 15-10-5 structures, and as large an interest in any other individual owner in a 3,400-acre tract with Doctor Wilhoit and the Pracie oil & Gas Co. He also has from one-half interest to four-fifths interest in 800 acres around the Big Caden & Co. gas well, and another 400 acres in leases on another untested structure in that same locality.

First Venture a Success

Mr. Crowmell first embarked into the oil business in the year 1912, his initial test being drilled near the town of Inola, in Rogers county, which resulted in a paying venture. Five wells were all told drilled which proved productive and later the property was sold and netted quite a handsome figure on the amount invested. After disposing of this property he located a structure in Marshall county upon which was drilled a shallow gasser.

While operations were progressing in the Healdton pool, Mr. Cromwell predicted that the southeast direction offered the best bet for larger production and future operations bore out his statement. He also worked out several localities in Comanche and Stephens counties and upon his recommendation tests were drilled which resulted in paying ventures.

The Earliest Wildcatter.

The Earliest Wadcoater.
About 20 years ago, when the new Ranger, Austinburg, pool, in Texas, was calling the Oklahoma operator across the Oklahoma-Texas estate line, and a large number of them heeding the call, this man wore out a pair of mules and two automobiles surveying the virgin country comprising the northern portion of Hughes county and the southern portion of Oklahoma county, Oklahoma. He was a geologist, and had already established a reputation for himself by his record in Rogers county, Oklahoma.

At that time there were few roads worthy of that name in those parts of Hughes and Okfuskee counties, and this pioneer suffered many hardships and mishaps. In April, 1919, after having visited the Gladys Bell Oil company, Cromwell and Graves went in 18-8-10, in Hughes county, which developed a 30,000,000-cubic foot gas flow at a depth of 1,946 feet, which really made it the pioneer gasser of that locality. If its location can be regarded as a part of this district,

Cromwell was on his way home and when he arrived at the bridge across Salt creek, he stopped and wandered down the creek bottom. Here Cromwell, well versed in "rock bound lore," had discovered the outcropping of the rock and his experienced eye indicated the presence of a good structure, which might or might not obtain oil.

He was curious to know just what the possibilities of structure were and he traversed the county, found satisfactory dips and then decided he was on a dome of exceptionally large possibilities.

with possibilities. He was, however, well satisfied with his findings. Cromwell returned to Muskogee and began to look around for assistance in mapping and detailing his new find. Just about that time a young geologist had hung out a shingle. He said he had come here as a residence manager of the Greenwood Oil company. Previous to his present connections he was in the employ of the United States Geological Survey in the geological department. Quiet, cautious and like the majority of the "rock bound" men, adverse to publicity, his presence and advent into his line of work was not a great revelation. However, here it may be said that his popularity now is very high—but he attracted by the fact of his work a clientele made loyal by results attained. And, according to Mr. M. K. Read, that Mr. Cromwell discovered and outlined his new discovery.

Make Maps of Structure.
Mr. Cromwell and Mr. Read then surveyed the original find. Mr. Cromwell guiding Read to the far outskirts of the structure as he had found it. Mr. Read also recommended the Cosden location, on the Cromwell structure. It might be said in passing that reports on this Cromwell structure made by 28 geologists of the major oil concerns, individuals and geological firms in and out of the state differed only in a slight

Detail from the original survey and mapping by Reade.

Detail work finally completed, Cromwell started out on an active lease campaign with the one thought in mind to secure if possible every available acreage on his structure.

Almost insurmountable obstacles beat against this ambition, and at the least of these was competition of lease brokers who, not knowing just exactly what was in the air, had determined however, to "get in" on the ground. Cromwell attempted this by offering fabulous sums to the farmers and landholders.

Pioneer Work Difficult.

Disagreeable weather, the unpropitious conditions of the country, the persistent lease-grafters, knocking back of proper finance and poor health, did much to make his mission a tiresome one, but Cromwell fought untiringly towards his ambition and inside of a few months had amassed a total of some seven thousand acres of leases. He had under lease at that time every acre mapped on his structure, with the exception of one 40-acre tract, which was under lease to the Gillipps in terms of the 1862 Act.

WORKING night and day with a crew of flooded interpreter—Felix B. Canard, of Wetumka. Four hundred acres of the land was Indian land. Cromwell at the end of the fourth day after his discovery of the Wetumka. Four hundred acres blocked out and thousands of the local landowners of Wetumka contributed part of their holdings to the blocking of the first lot. Martha E. Gregor, the widow who lived in the southeast of the 6-8-10, contributed 120 acres, retaining 40 acres, which were afterwards sold for her. Others who joined Seven used acreage were Nat Williams, James Porter, H. D. Hall, Thomas Ryan, Harry E. Chowine, and K. V.

The remaining 4,000 acres of leases were bought and paid for by Mr. Cromwell and E. L. Graves, a lawyer and land title man of Muskogee, the prices ranging from \$1 to \$10 per acre. Then came months of vain effort in trying to get the larger companies interested enough in the

discovery to drill a test well on the block. Finally Dr. J. C. Wilhoit, of Kansas City, and Mr. Janeway, of Tulsa, Okla., came to his rescue and drilled a test in the northeast corner of the block, or about 180 feet for a half interest in block containing 2,600 acres. This resulted in a gas well at a depth of 1,297 feet. Well was drilled in the northwest corner of the block and at this point the interesting tests so far drilled in this locality. At a depth of 780 feet there was a showing of 9,000,000 cubic feet of gas from a total of 54 feet of gas-bearing strata. At a depth of 1,407 feet there was a showing for 18,000,000 cubic feet of gas, which was bidden headed off. At 2,135 feet a 35-foot sand was penetrated, the gas being better than 33 degrees Baumé.

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For this second test the above parties were joined by the Geological Survey and Doctor Willhoit directed the drilling of the well under the Cecil Grundy syndicate.

Blocks More Acreage.

During the same month (as discovered first structure) after completing the lease, the parties indicated he had made a similar trip through wildcat territory to find a structure in the vicinity of Arkesa Springs, in Oklahoma county, but upon investigation the area in question was 10, range 8, where he located the structure in 15-10-8. Indications for a pool of promise also called Mr. Currewell's attention and he immediately began work on the lease to 400 acres on his first attempt.

to two miles on his first attempt. He then leased the land and attempted to interest someone in the larger concerns to drill a test but was unsuccessful. With a full determination to interest someone sooner or later he started out trying to increase his leaseholds. This work was started on December 21 and on March 29, 1921 he had acquired a sufficient amount of acreage and a test was started by the Couden Oil & Gas Co. In 19-3-19, which resulted in 28,000,000-cubic feet of gas with a rock pressure of 1,425 pounds per square foot.

The pressure of this well was so great that drilling deeper was impossible and ever since November 20